

UTAH CHARTER SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM

Grant Writer's Training

Startup & Implementation Grants

April 14, 2014

Writer's Training Overview

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General Information

- The purpose of Utah's State Grant is to expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to students in Utah by providing financial assistance for planning, program design and initial implementation of new charter schools.
- The State Charter School Board (SCSB) received \$2,100,000 per year in FY13 – FY17 to subgrant to support qualified charter schools. In addition, the SCSB received \$200,000 to provide administrative services and \$200,000 for a Mentoring Program.

Eligible Applicants

- Grant applicants must conform to the requirements for charter schools in the Utah Charter Schools Act (U.C.A. §53A-1a-507).
- Grant applicants may be in the planning year (startup) or first two operational years with students (implementation)
- Schools that have received a state startup or implementation grant under another school name or before being reconstituted are not eligible.
- Should the charter school change to non-charter status within ten years of receiving grant funds, grant funds must be reimbursed to SCSB.

Lottery Requirements

- Enrollment preference for children/grandchildren of founding parents, teachers, or staff cannot exceed five percent (5%) of the school's total enrollment.
- Enrollment preference cannot be granted to any groups not explicitly approved in the charter agreement.
- A charter school may never charge families to be designated a founder or to be enrolled in the charter school.
- “Charge” means to impose a duty, responsibility, or obligation on (e.g., require volunteer hours, require donations, etc.).

Application Process

- Startup (pgs. 11-16) or Implementation (pgs. 17-20) Grant Application
- Startup:
 - Follow grant format and application sequence (pg. 11)
 - Budget narrative (pg. 12)
 - Facilities update and executed lease (pg. 14)
 - Optional items (e.g., professional development, technology, library)
- Implementation:
 - Follow grant format and appendices (pgs. 17-18)
 - Executive summary (pg. 18)
 - Progress report (pg. 19)
 - Revised budget (pg. 19)
 - Charter School Performance Standards (year 3 only) (pg. 20)
- Grant funds may not be spent or encumbered until final written approval of budget is received.

Funding & Fundable Activities

- Grant funds must be used for the following:
 - Post-award planning and design of the educational program, including refining results (standards) and measurements (evaluation) of progress toward those results.
 - Research-based professional learning activities for teachers and other staff and training offered through the grant program.
 - Initial implementation of the charter school including:
 - Informing the community about the school,
 - Acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies,
 - Acquiring, developing or aligning curriculum, and
 - Other initial operational costs.
 - Costs associated with creating and implementing office functions;
 - Costs associated with the installation of computers, data systems, networks, and telephones;
 - Personnel expenses incurred either before or after the school's opening (not to exceed a total of \$5,000 per month); and
 - Rental or occupancy costs for the school facility for a reasonable period of time in preparation for the school's opening.

Funding Levels

- Grant applicants under this program may receive up to \$300,000 over a thirty-six month period.
- 'Base + per pupil' formula
 - Startup grant (year 1) – up to base + per pupil at 90% of projected enrollment
 - Implementation grant (year 2) – up to base + per pupil at 90% of projected enrollment.
 - Implementation grant (year 3) – up to base + per pupil at fall enrollment (year 2)
- No funding level is guaranteed.
- Funding level estimates for FY15
 - Base = \$6,484
 - Per pupil = \$141

Recipient Monitoring

- As a condition of this grant, USOE is responsible for monitoring charter schools to ensure that they adhere to their Charter Agreement. This monitoring system reviews charter schools annually as required in U.C.A. §53A-1a-501.6.
- The Charter School Section will keep track of specific information as a part of the grant. This may include attendance at mandatory trainings, submission of required reports, progress towards charter agreement performance goals, as well as other items.
- To assist with proper notification of requirements and school progress, grantee schools are required to notify Charter School Section of any administrator, leadership, or board turnover at the school during the full grant cycle.

Deadlines

- Deadlines
 - May 2, 2014: Grant Application due
 - May – June 2014: Revisions as necessary
 - June 6, 2014: Final Grant Application due
 - June 13, 2014: Applicant notified of grant status
 - June 1, 2014: Deadline for requesting a 90 day no-cost extension
 - June 30, 2014 End of fiscal year for all subgrants
- NOTE: Grant funds may not be spent or encumbered until final written approval of budget is received.

Tips for Success

- Tips for success
 - Carefully read everything, paying particular attention to the scoring rubrics.
 - Allow yourself plenty of time to conduct planning, gather data, and collect the necessary information from other sources.
 - Consider the grant cap and funding requests over the entire thirty-six month grant period.
 - Follow the directions for the format and sequence of your proposal.
 - Proofread your final proposal.
 - When you have finished writing your proposal, have someone who has not been involved in the writing process read it and score it using the rubrics.
 - Utilize the Final Checklist (pg. 4).

Goal Detail

Here is an example of how each selected goal and corresponding budget should be detailed in the startup grant application.

Goal 1: Student Academic Achievement in Reading

80% of students will be sufficient / substantial in reading as measured by end-of-level CRTs by 2015. Reduce the percent of students identified as “below proficient” by 10% each year until less than 5% of students are in this category by 2015. Provide additional academic support through tutoring and use of computer assisted software.

- a. Establish baseline in 2014-15 school year.
- b. Analyze data to determine areas of needed focus to help students reach proficient status from 2014 assessment data.
- c. Utilize Direct Instruction in K-2 starting in 2015 to assure that 93% of the 1st – 3rd graders meet grade-level targets by the end of the year as measured by DIBELS.
- d. Utilize Core Knowledge literature and include domain vocabulary in all lessons in 2014-15 school year and beyond to develop cultural literacy and background knowledge.

Budget Detail

Goal 1 – Student Academic Achievement in Reading	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Library books will be purchased, over 3 years, approximately 350 books per grade level K – 8 (average of \$21.72 per hardback book)	\$15,204	\$22,806	\$30,408
Core Knowledge Literature sets - \$3000 per grade level for 6 classroom sets of novels aligned with the Core Knowledge sequence – 9 grade levels	\$6,000	\$9,000	\$12,000
Scholastic Core Knowledge Literature sets for 22 classrooms (\$425-475 per classroom)	\$10,450		
Kids Discover Magazine for K-3 – 12 subscriptions per classroom (12 classrooms at \$19.95 per subscription)		\$2,873	\$2,873
Total	\$31,654	\$34,679	\$45,281

Performance Detail (Academic)

Goal 1 – Student Academic Achievement in Reading	Target FY15	Perform. FY15	Target FY16	Explanation
Percentage of students achieving sufficient / substantial proficiency in reading on end-of-level CRTs	80%	73%	80%	Baseline for 2014-2015 school year is set at 73%
Percentage of students identified as “below proficient” in reading on end-of-level CRTs	7%	5%	4%	Teachers used computer assisted software with students identified as “below proficient” in the prior year every day for an additional 15 minutes of reading instruction
Percentage of students in grades K – 2 that meet grade-level targets on end of year DIBELS	93%	95%	95%	Although 95% of K – 2 students met grade-level targets on end of year DIBELS, only 75% met the target at mid-year. School will provide teachers with additional professional development specific to reading fluency during the 2015-2016 school year.

Performance Detail (Budget)

Goal 1 – Student Academic Achievement in Reading	Budget FY14	Actual FY14	Explanation
Library books will be purchased, over 3 years, approximately 350 books per grade level K – 8 (average of \$21.72 per hardback book)	\$15,204	\$14,500	350 books were purchased at a better price than anticipated
Core Knowledge Literature sets - \$3000 per grade level for 6 classroom sets of novels aligned with the Core Knowledge sequence – 9 grade levels	\$6,000	\$6,000	Core Knowledge literature sets were purchased for grades K and 1
Scholastic Core Knowledge Literature sets for 22 classrooms (\$425-475 per classroom)	\$10,450	\$9,350	Scholastic Core Knowledge Literature sets were purchased for 22 classrooms with some sets purchased at a better price than anticipated
Kids Discover Magazine for K-3 – 12 subscriptions per classroom (12 classrooms at \$19.95 per subscription)	\$0	\$1,437	Because of the cost savings on other items, Kids Discover Magazine was purchased for K – 1 classrooms this year
Total	\$31,654	\$31,287	School requests a 90-day no-cost extension to expend the remaining \$367 on additional library books (Note: Also must be submitted on school letterhead and signed.)

Authorized Contact

- Definition: The person who has the legal authority to sign legal documents on behalf of the school. The authorized contact should be a member of the charter school and not an educational service provider. Board authorization needs to delegate responsibility to the authorized contact to execute the approved grant application, comply with the certifications of the grant program, including all fiscal requirements, and act as the board's authorized official for the grant award. The authorized contact can have no conflict of interest with any party (i.e., employee, contractor, vendor, etc.) that has a financial interest in the grant award.
- Responsibilities:
 - Oversight of the entire grant project.
 - Manage grant budget.
 - Responsibility for compliance with state laws and guidance regarding grant management.
 - Liaison with Charter School Section and attend required meetings.
 - Liaison with charter school governing board to provide regular updates.

General Grant Management

- Change of Status. Should the charter school change to non-charter status within ten years of receiving grant funds, grant funds must be reimbursed to SCSB.
- Conflicts of Interest. The authorized contact and governing board members must have no real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest with any vendors or personnel contracted to provide equipment or services funded under the grant except as provided in U.C.A. §53A-1a-518.
- Extension of Time to Expend Grant Funds. If grantee schools anticipate that they will be unable to spend grant funds by June 30, an extension request must be filed (Deadline = June 1). An extension allows up to 90 additional days to expend funds. Extension requests should outline the reason for delay, the amount of carryover, and the anticipated new end date. The grantee is still bound by the approved budget. Extensions are subject to approval by Charter School Section staff and are not guaranteed. It's important to monitor spending throughout the year and make the necessary budget revisions to meet the June 30 deadline. An extension should be the last resort. The following year's funding will be held until spending is complete.

Financial Responsibilities

- Audits. Grantee schools are responsible for annual financial audits, including these grant funds, and are expected to provide its fiscal agent with complete financial information to satisfy federal and state requirements.
- Financial Reports. An AFR and APR is required to be filed by October 1 each year. An Audited Financial Statement is required to be filed by November 30 each year. If the AFR, APR, or Audited Financial Statement is not filed on time, complete, and accurate, grantees risk losing their funds for the following year.
- Termination of Award. If it is determined that any grant funds have been misused, grant funds must be returned to the State Charter School Board. The State Charter School Board may terminate a grant award upon 30 days' notice if it is determined that the applicant is not fulfilling the funded program responsibilities as specified in the approved application.

Questions?